

THE LIFE  
AND EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES OF  
*George Barrington,*

*Now Transported to Botany-Bay, for picking the Pocket of  
Mr. Townsend, at Enfield Races—Containing an Account of  
the various robberies he has committed in England, Ireland,  
and Scotland,—Also his Love Exploits, sufferings on Board the  
Hulk at Woolwich, various Trials, famous Speeches. &c. &c.*

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

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GEORGE BARRINGTON, alias Waldron, alias Jones, the hero of these memoirs, was born at Rush, in Ireland, 1759. His mothers name was Waldron, a Milliner of that town: the name of his father was Barrington, captain of a marching regiment quartered at Rush.—When six years of age his father treated him with the utmost tenderness, put him under the direction of Mr. Jones an Apothecary of Dublin, who sent him to a common school for twelve months, and then removed him to a grammar school, where he continued until twelve years old, where he was much famed for his ingenuity in mischief.—Mr Jones then took him into his house to instruct him in the business of a surgeon, apothecary and man-midwife. In this occupation he might have been a proficient, but he gave his attention entirely to the inventing and making surgeon's instruments. When sixteen years of age he rushed into every kind of extravagance, frequented all places of entertainment, and getting acquainted with a woman named Ranby, her extravagance greatly embarrassed him; his father being in America and his allowance so small for such expensive ways. About this time an Irish member of parliament had his pocket picked at the Dublin Theatre, and suspicion falling on our hero, he was for the first

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time taken into custody; but discharged with honor by telling the name of his master.

Soon after this Mr Jones missed a twenty pound note and seven guineas and suspected his apprentice; but he put on a look of innocence, denied the charge, and his master dropped the enquiry. In 1774, Barrington's girl was detected attempting to pick the pocket of the Bishop of K.—who only gave her a moral admonition. Soon after this they went to the Theatre, where she picked the pocket of Lord M. and was detected. Barrington was also secured as an accomplice. On searching them the watch was found in his breeches, and they were both sent to prison. But Lord M. knowing Barrington's father, would not prosecute. The scandal of this, and the persuasion of friends, induced him to go as a surgeon's mate from Dublin to the West Indies. After this voyage he came to London in 1775. In April of that year he first made his appearance at Bow-street, by the name of Brown; charged with stealing a Lady's Purse, but he was discharged.

In July he was again brought to the office for stealing Captain Sunderland's watch, and fully committed, but the Captain being ordered to America before the trial came on, Barrington got off. He soon got acquainted with Miss West at Covent-Garden Theatre, and they lived together as man and wife, attending all the public places. In this partnership they robbed Mr. Day of his watch, at the Pantheon, for which they were both apprehended, tried and acquitted. In 1777, Barrington was examined before Sir J. Fielding, for robbing Miss Hurst of a silver watch and 5*l*. He was committed, but the bill not found.

He sketched a plan for a knife with three joints, and got a currier near the Mews to make it, for which he paid two guineas. But the man asking what it was for, Barrington said, can you keep a secret—yes. It is a devise for picking



pockets, when the pocket is too small to admit of the hand. It is close to the person I put on one joint; if at a distance two; if far of three. He then took his leave, and the cutler soon after found that he paid dear for his curiosity, having lost two guineas and a half out of his pocket. In 1775, Prince Orlov, a Russian nobleman, paid a visit to this court, and going to Covent-garden Theatre, he got close to the Prince and conveyed a diamond snuff-box, said to be worth 40,000l from his waistcoat pocket into his own, but not so dexterously as to escape detection; the nobleman felt the loss, and seized Barrington, when a scuffle and uproar ensued, in the midst of which he in a secret manner slid the box into his hand. He was committed but no prosecution followed.

A few weeks after this he was turned out of the lobby of the house of Lords, being known by Mr. G. against whom he bore revenge, he was in prison a long time, for want of money to keep the peace. After this release he was detected robbing Mrs. Dammian, and committed for trial.

He was indicted for stealing a pair of studs, a purse, half a guinea and three and sixpence. She swore positively to his picking her pocket, and took one purse out of his hand, which was confirmed by other witnesses. This was December the 18th 1776, at Drury-lane playhouse, when the King and Queen were there. He made an artful defence, but the jury found him guilty, and he was sent on board the hulks for three years; where being safely lodged, Miss West sent him constantly two guineas per week, and visited him as often as convenient. In one of these excursions she picked the pocket of the celebrated David Brown digman, a prisoner on board the hulks, who had plenty of cash, But Barrington made her return it. This woman was tried seven times at the Old Bailey, three of which she was found guilty. The last of which was on the 14th of Feb. 1777, for robbing Squire Ansell

of a watch. She was sentenced to three years imprisonment in Newgate, about the expiration of which time she caught the goal distemper, and soon died.

Barrington was soon after detected in St. Paul's cathedral, picking the pocket of Mrs. Montague, and taken to the Crown, in St. Paul's church yard, where asking leave of the Constable to go backwards, he made his escape. He got in company with John Brown Esq. and while in conversation, picked his pocket of 40 guineas and a gold watch. Upon this booty he lived until he was apprehended for robbing Eliz. Ironmonger, and indicted for stealing a watch, a silk watch-string, and a seal set in metal, privately from her person, March 15th 1778. She deposed that she went to St. Paul's church to hear a charity sermon, and lost her watch. Mr. Payne apprehended Barrington, and searching him, the watch dropped from his hair; being called upon for his defence he addressed the jury in a very ingenious and artful manner. They found him guilty of stealing, but not privately, and he was sent on board the hulks for five years, but at the end of four was pardoned on condition of quitting the kingdom, which not doing, he was taken up and served the remainder of his time in Newgate. On Feb. 28th, 1783, he was tried for picking the pocket of Sir Godfrey Webster, Bart. and acquitted. And on April 7th, 1785, for picking the pocket of John Bagshaw, Esq; when he was acquitted.

On the 19th. of Jan. 1787, he picked the pocket of Mr. Le Mosurier, was detected, and delivered into the hands of a constable, who suffered him to escape, when he went to Edinburgh, but being there known, he went to Glasgow, and engaged in a company of comedians, when he robbed their wardrobe, and accompanied with the Juliet of their stage, made off, and went to Leith races, where he picked the pocket of Mr. Cambell, of a gold watch, and 20 guineas, and deserting his fair companion, went to Carlisle, where meeting

1. Brown, an old acquaintance, they set up an E O table. From thence they went to Derby races, where Mr H, of that town, having won about 70l, at their table, our hero followed him down stairs, and picked his pocket of the cash; but he almost immediately missing it, seized George by the coat, crying out for help, but before that help came found himself in possession of nothing but a coat. Confusion immediately ensued—Brown put the lights out, swept the money into his pockets and got off. In revenge for such conduct the company broke their E O table. Our hero went to the public meeting at York, where he picked up 80l. and watches.

From thence he went to Newcastle, and being at the theatre one evening, a gentleman lost his watch, when Barrington being suspected, he was soon secured, but in his way to the place of confinement, he dropped his booty in the street and it was found the next morning. When before the Justice, a gentleman from London knowing him, he was detained, and notice sent to Bow-street, when he was brought up by a *corpus*, and safely lodged in Newgate. Being outlawed, he was brought up to the court of king's bench, when after a variety of arguments, the outlawry was reserved, and he was tried at the Old Bailey, for picking the pockets of Mr de Mesurier, and for want of sufficient evidence, acquitted. On Wednesday morning Sept. 15th, 1790, he was arraigned for stealing, of the 1st of September, a gold watch. the property of Henry Hare Townsend, Esq.

Mr. Henry Townsend sworn—On the 1st of sept. I was at Unfield March, on account of the races; I believe it was about two o'clock, that is the time fixed for the horses to start; I was on foot; I went to the ground in a phaeton, I got out of the phaeton and was walking about, I did not miss my watch till I was spoke to by Mr. Blades; I missed it from my waist pocket; I had a new pair of leather breeches on, and afraid the seals would dirty them; it was a gold watch & chain, and metal key; I felt my watch in my pocket after I came

the ground; I think it must have been a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes when I missed it. I recovered my watch again, but I do not recollect who produced it to me; the watch was given to Lady Lake, and she took it home with her; and when we took Mr Barrington before the Justice, I sent for the watch, and it was given me by a servant.

John Waddock sworn—I am a coachman to Mr Townsend, I knew nothing of the matter till I helped to take the prisoner to the booth; I had one hand on his collar and the other hold of his right hand—I was left in care of him—I put him at the back of the booth, and there was a carpet at the back of that—I saw the watch drop between Mr. Barrington and the carpet. It apparently fell on the left side of him; I saw it as it jingled down before it reached the ground.

Mrs Danby sworn—I was in the next booth to that in which the prisoner was brought; I was but a very little way off him—I there was nobody between him and me: nothing but the partition: the prisoner was side ways to me when he dropt the watch on his side: He dropped the watch from his hand—I told him of it at the time, I cannot recollect which hand, his hand was by the side of him at the time.

Barrington being called upon for his defence, addressed the court in that sensible and pathetic manner which he is so capable of doing. He made several remarks upon the evidence against him, endeavouring to prove that it was impossible they could distinctly see from whom the watch was thrown to the ground.

The Jury after a short consultation, found him guilty.

On Wednesday, Sept. 21<sup>d</sup>, being the seventh and last day of these sessions, this prisoner, George Barrington, was set to the bar in order to receive sentence.

George Barrington, the sentence of the court upon you is that you be transported for the term of seven years, to parts

beyond the sea, as his Majesty, with the advice of his Privy Council, shall think fit to declare and appoint.

### GEORGE BARRINGTON.

*My Lord,* I had a few words to say why sentence of death should not be passed upon me; I had much to say, though I shall say but little on the occasion—Notwithstanding I have the best opinion of your Lordship's candour, and have no wish or pleasure in casting a reflection on any person whatever, but I cannot help observing that it is the strange lot of some persons through life, that with the best wishes, the best endeavours, and the best intentions, they are not able to escape the venomous tooth of calumny; whatever they say or do is so twisted and perverted from the reality, that they will meet with censures and misfortunes, where they were entitled perhaps to success and praise.—The world, my Lord, hath given me credit for much more abilities than I am confident of possessing, but the world should also consider that the greatest abilities may be so obstructed by the mercenary nature of some unfeeling minds, as to render them entirely useless to the possessor.—But my Lord, the die is cast—I am prepared to meet the sentence of the court, and the painful lot assigned me, I hope, with patience and resignation.

Mr. Barrington then made a genteel bow and retired.

The following dialogue passed between Barrington and the Cutler, during his bargaining with him for the knife with the joints (as before mentioned) for picking of pockets—The Cutler having a desire to know the use of the knife, Barrington informed him, that it was a device for the more effectually picking pockets!—"To pick pockets!"—replied the astonished Cutler, "Really, I shall be much obliged if you will shew me in what manner you mean to turn it to account?"—"Certainly," replied Barrington, "When I find myself in a crowd, and in pretty near contact with my object, I mean to

use the first joint only, which is much easier of access to a close pocket than a hand, however small. If at a little distance the second joint will best answer the purpose. But if yet farther off, it is easy to perceive that the third joint must be resorted to."

The Cutler repairing without loss of time to his wife, before whom ensued the following conversation.

*Cutler.* What do you think, my dear, the knife was for?

*Wife.* How should I know, quotha!

*Cutler.* Why for a pickpocket,

*Wife.* O Lord! I hope not.

*Cutler.* Indeed my dear, but it was; and he paid me very well for it too, and let me into the secret into the bargain. Here is the cash [*putting his hand into his pocket*]—It is not here though—I have left it on the counter—John, bring me the two guineas I left in the shop.

*John.* Here is no money here, Sir upon my word, Sir!

*Cutler.* Perdition seize the scoundrel! he has shewn his trick with a vengeance; he has picked my pocket of two guineas and a ha'p, O Lord! O Lord! that I should be such a gull!—But well, well, what is done cannot be undone—He is a d—d clever fellow; and I may as well forgive him.

Here endeth the life, for the present, of the noted George Barrington, and however we may admire the greatness of his abilities, we cannot but lament the sad perversion of them—abilities which might have rendered him the ornament of society, he has basely employed to the destruction of it; and is now held out as an example to all men, that neither extensive knowledge, nor crafty ingenuity, are able to evade that justice which every injured fellow-creature has a right to demand.

F I N I S.

W. A. *Printer,* DARLINGTON.

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